

SN. 10/701,406

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. SANA:003

REMARKS

Claims 3-12, 14-16, and 18 are now pending in this application for which applicants seek reconsideration.

Amendment

Claims 3-12, 14-16, and 18 have been amended to improve their form and readability, and to remove all of the informalities identified by the examiner. Claims 3, 9, 14, and 18 have been placed in independent form to place them in condition for allowance. Claims 1, 2, 13, and 17 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter has been introduced.

Non-Art Rejection

Claims 4-12 and 14-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, essentially because these claims positively recite components of a vehicle seat, while the preamble calls for a seat compartment mechanism per se. The preamble of these claims has been properly changed to a --vehicle seat-- to overcome this rejection. The present amendment also overcomes all other informalities identified by the examiner.

Art Rejection

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by any of Weiglein (USP 720,776, which is identified by the examiner as Bennett¹), James (USP 1,077,199), Markwick (USP 1,309,097), Radke (USP 3,336,077), Rogers (USP 5,584,530), Hoffman (USP 5,597,199), Menne (USP 5,622,404), Smith (GB 2,316,608), and Johnson (USP 6,161,896). Claim 13 was also rejected under § 102(b) as anticipated by any of Radke, Hoffman, and Johnson. Claim 17 was also rejected under § 102(b) as anticipated by Hoffman. Finally, claim

¹. The examiner identified references *b*, *c*, & *e* in the Detailed Action, but they do not appear in this reference. Applicants have assumed that the examiner inserted these references, but did not furnish the marked up copy, or the references are typos. Similar issues are found with other applied references.

SN. 10/701,406

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. SANA:003

12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Smith in view of Akihiro (JP 7-52715).

Applicants submit that these rejections have been rendered moot since only the allowable claims are pending in this application.

Allowable Claims

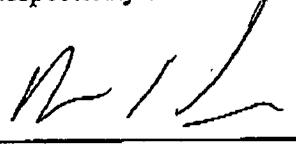
Claims 3-11, 14-16, and 18 were indicated to be allowable if they are placed in independent form. As claims 3, 9, 14, and 18 have been placed in independent form, and claim 12 has been amended to depend from claim 3, claims 3-12, 14-16, and 18 are now in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that claims 3-12, 14-16, and 18 are in condition for allowance, and thus urge the examiner to issue an early Notice of Allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicants urge the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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